WHAT WENT DOWN

Early October - Five police cars vandalized with a marker during a pro-choice rally.

October 16 - Police hassled a crew of joyriders and attempted to secure a stolen dirt bike when "the crowd began to circle the officers while throwing bricks, bottles and other objects at them. One marked police vehicle was kicked repeatedly and had its windshield broken with brick before the group fled the area."

Late October - Anti-police and decolonial anarchists graffiti spotted in South and West Philly.

November 5 - Anti-colonial anarchists blockade a railway chokepoint using nearby found material. The action was claimed in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en resisting drilling in the Wedzin Kwa and anti-colonial resistance worldwide. "We hope to inspire many more and frequent railway blockades as an effective action to disrupt colonial and ecocidal infrastructure all across Turtle Island and Globally."

November 13 - An anti-trans rally of about 30 people was countered by more than 100 protesters at Independence Hall. Many of the trans-phobes went to Khyber Pass Pub but were kicked out. "While there was at least one round of counter-demonstrators splashing the anti-transgender demonstration with water, no arrests transpired during our time observing the event."

Late November - Slogans against greenwashing and development are painted on construction signs at the FDR meadows.

Late November - Michael Brown aka Doc Grimson of 15 Fox Ridge Road in Glenmoore, PA is doxxed by anti-fascists for his participation in Aryan Compartmented Elements

December 11 - Philly ABC hosts an info session about anarchist prisoners in Italy and the UK to build international solidarity.

December 17 - A banner is hung in solidarity with forest defenders arrested in Atlanta. "The struggle against cop city is not over!"

December 26 - A statue of Abraham Lincoln is tagged and vandalized in memory of 40 Dakota warriors he had hung, anti-colonial and anti-fascist graffiti is also written. "We encourage more actions to dismantle and destroy colonial capitalist statues and institutions that perpetuate oppression and exploitation."

New Year's Eve - After a one year hiatus, the annual NYE noise demo returns to the Federal Detention Center, shining lasers, shooting fireworks, and making lots of noise. "Hopefully more demos happen this year and people are inspired to keep acting in defiance of the police state hellscape we live in."

January 21 - A vigil for Tortuguita, a forest defender killed by police in Atlanta, takes place in Clark Park. Some attendees march through West Philly, smashing windows and writing graffiti. "Even though Philly is far from Atlanta, Tortuguita's death has been deeply felt here."

Late January - Graffiti memorializing Tortuguita, against police and cop city, against cellicon valley, and against colonization is seen around West Philly and South Philly.

February 2 - Supporters write letters to arrested Atlanta forest defenders.

February 6 - Philly ABC hosts a letter-writing night for imprisoned anti-fascist Alex Stokes.

Early February - Fences at Bartram's North are broken and anti-cellicon valley graffiti is written by "your secret admirer".

Mid February - Posters in solidarity with forest defenders are put up in West Philly.

February 12 - Comcast experiences a power outage in parts of Philly as fiber optic cables are cut right before the Superbowl game begins.

February 19 - A vigil and community skate event memorializes Tyre Nichols at Paine's skate park.

February 21 - Demonstrators gather outside the offices of Greenberg Traurig, a sponsor of the Atlanta Police Foundation, in solidarity with the struggles to stop cop city. "...take Direct Action, and escalate against colonial developers, their funders, and the police everywhere to dismantle the industrial capitalist state death machine and defend the community and land."

Late February - An assortment of graffiti against cellicon valley, cop city, police, and other themes is written around Philly.

February 24 - A demonstration protests outside the offices of AXA for providing insurance to Cop City contractor Brasfield & Gorrie.

Late February - Norfolk Southern train tracks are sabotaged using copper wire. "NS is responsible for massive ecological and social devastation through disasters like the recent derailment but they do even more damage when they function with out derailments. So many destructive companies can not function with out NS and other shipping and logistics companies."

March 13 - Philly ABC writes letters to American Indian Movement prisoner Leonard Peltier.

March 14 - A 71-year-old man drives his minivan into the front doors of the Philadelphia Police's headquarters on Broad Street, mangling the front brass doors of the building.

Mid March - Graffiti against cop city and memorializing Tortuguita is written. ★

SUBMISSIONS

We accept submissions of material by, for and relevant to anarchists, from the so-called Philadelphia region and beyond. We are most interested in works that say what only anarchists can say, making our project unique from the Left and even other anarchist projects. No more than 2,000 words please.

anathema.noblogs.org ★ *anathemaphl@riseup.net*

2023, BABY!

Out:	In:
dropping a pin	hand drawn maps
online fundraisers	benefit events
"the state is the real terrorist"	"terrorism until we win"
shared accounts	piracy
local poly rat-king	dating people in other scenes & cities
road	paths & trails
cars	bikes & trucks
looking clean	leaning into subculture
sleek militancy	miss matched camo
pickets	paintbombs
crews, gangs, AGs	networks
abolish prisons	fire to the prisons
living alone	punk houses
left unity	non-hierarchical chaos

Still relevant in 2023:

plain black bikes
hooded rain jackets
TOR & TAILS
phoneless walks
paper fliers & zines
paying with cash
petty crime

A SPACE: A POSTMORTEM

A-space has been declared dead. Rumors about the autonomous social center's imminent demise began circulating online in the closing weeks of last year. These rumors were recently confirmed by the official A-space Facebook page. Based on the reactions to this news, many local people are unsure whether the 32-year-old space died of natural causes or was choked out of existence by nefarious forces. It has become necessary, as a result, to examine the factors involved bringing about the end of this long-standing anarchist institution.

One thing is certain: A-space had a long life. It first opened its doors on Baltimore Avenue in West Philadelphia in 1991. Since the 1970s, a wave of similar autonomous social centers have spread across Europe, North America, and elsewhere. While some of these spaces continue to thrive, most have blinked out of existence long ago.

There is no simple explanation for A-space's relative longevity. As a community resource, A-space was limited in many respects: its "kitchen" consisted of a kettle and a sink, its "library" was a pile of zines, and there was just enough room to fit three long tables and a couple dozen chairs. A projector was made available for movie nights. Otherwise, the neighbors asked that events end early and not use amplified sound.

Despite these limitations, A-space provided West Philadelphia anarchists with a social center and, over the years, countless other groups squeezed into the space

for meetings and events. It helped that the building is located on a popular, commercial street and is part of a community land trust with a remarkably low "cost share." This made A-space durable and, as a result, reliable. Perhaps that was A-space's biggest strength: for decades, people could rely on it being there.

Like most places, A-space closed its doors in March 2020 in response to the outbreak of COVID-19 in North America. No one, including the A-space collective, knew at the time that it would not re-open. In their official statement, the A-space collective points to the pandemic lockdowns as the beginning of the end of the space: "During this extended time while the A-Space was closed, our collective members moved away, started new projects, and just went on with other life priorities. As time went on, we knew we had to determine how to move forward, given our limited capacity." These circumstances, it seems, led the collective to decide to call it quits.

Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic created a crisis for autonomous social centers. A regime of social distancing and quarantining called into question the social center mode of organizing, at least initially. Many social centers have since cautiously re-opened their doors, following the lifting of lockdowns. But, for some, re-opening meant radically rethinking their operations.

LAVA, another West Philadelphia autonomous space, has shifted away from crowded events. Compared to A-space, LAVA was equipped for large events and had been a major music venue in the neighborhood. Lately, the collective principally has used the main floor to serve community needs with free food distribution on Mondays and Thursdays and a "Really Really Free Market" every second Saturday. Sources say that the collective has no plans to hold large social events in the future.

Some among the old guard have challenged the narrative that A-space has closed due to COVID-19. They point to conflicts between collective members and users of the space that took place before the pandemic. In this version of events, unsettled conflicts created ongoing problems that led to the eventual self-destruction of the social center. The early stages of these particular conflicts were covered in Anathema in 2019.

There has been no shortage of major conflicts and petty grievances dogging the social center over the years. Any social center with this much history – barring exceptional conflict resolution skills – will accumulate old feuds. But any attempt to attribute the end of A-space, overall, to a particular social conflict or even a singular cause will inevitably suffer from confirmation bias.

What its detractors seem to miss is that, up until it closed, A-space was thriving as a community space for booking events. Community events cancelled in March 2020 included clothing swaps, crafting meet ups, meditation sessions, film screenings, Shape Note singing, and a death café. There were also regular political meetings on the calendar held by groups including IWW, SRA, ABC, and others. In addition to outside groups, members of the A-space collective intended to hold their monthly volunteer meeting and weekly open hours.

If anything, the space was overbooked by regular events to the point it was hard to find free space. As a result, the role of collective members was sometimes reduced to managing the calendar, paying bills, and keeping the space clean. Its status as an autonomous anarchist project was undermined as the space increasingly came to serve the needs of the other groups using the space, many of which were not anarchist.

Rather than isolate the A-space's fatal flaw, I want to account for a more limited problem: how did A-space drift so far from its role as an anarchist social center? In this regard, the old guard are right to point beyond the horizon of the pandemic. A-space's weaknesses as an anarchist social center have been apparent long before COVID-19.

This is not simply a problem of a pandemic, social conflicts, an overbooked calendar, or limited resources. The major problem was the lack of involvement in the space among neighborhood anarchists. Ideally, the collective would have recruited new anarchists during the lockdown and reopened the space after addressing the obstacles created by the pandemic. However, most anarchists in Philadelphia have shown little interest in using A-space in recent years, let alone running it.

This is not to place blame on local anarchists. At least two global factors contributed to this local conundrum: 1. The availability of electronic forms of communication that simply did not exist when the space opened in the 90s and, with apps like Signal, became easy to use somewhat securely 2. The relative lack of security available to an indoor space in an age of increased surveillance. Surveillance culture has driven many anarchists away from public spaces, which they no longer depend on for social networks. Along with the problems with the A-space already covered, it would be understandable if anarchists came to the conclusion – consciously or not – that this social center was, for their purposes, obsolete.

Nostalgia for an old autonomous space is equally understandable, but it can also blind people to the factors

that cause A-space's disappearance. It is sad to see A-space go. However, it is important to recognize when a project has outlived its function and avoid defending an institution as an end in itself. After all, autonomous spaces were conceived as alternatives to the formality and permanence of traditional institutions.

There is, on the other hand, some continuity. In closing its doors, A-space handed off their project to the organization that booked the space the most: Books Through Bars (BTB). For the past 30 years, BTB has, as their website states, sent "books to incarcerated people in six mid-Atlantic states." For years, they have shared the building on Baltimore Avenue with A-space and will expand to take over the social center.

It is unclear at this time to what extent BTB will use the space for public events. Sources say that their main use of the space will be storage and packing, but they are open to programming that fits with their mission.

If anarchists in Philadelphia were hoping to continue to use the building for anarchist projects, it seems like the best avenue would be to get involved in BTB. The space is still there, under the stewardship of an anarchist-friendly project. It seems possible that they would be open to BTB members operating the space like a social center as long as it doesn't interfere with their main activities. A future article will follow up with BTB once they have settled into the space. ★

TAG YOURSELF

According to the Philadelphia Inquirer there has been widespread use of fake license plates in the city. Temporary paper plates from Delaware, New Jersey, and even Texas are seen on the cars and trucks of many a privacy enthusiast. Let's take a look at this practice, how it works, the privacy benefits, and how it's being dealt with by police.

As more forms of social control and surveillance come about and creep further into everyday life, people find ways to maintain privacy, autonomy, and anonymity. The spread of red light cameras, automated toll collection, and other vehicle-specific policing has lead to a rise in new ways of circumventing these new forms of technological domestication. As has been said elsewhere "every new technology comes with an accompanying threat--or perhaps promise--of new crimes."

Okay, sure, but how does the paper plate thing work? Some states allow car dealers to sell cars faster by print out temporary plates. Delaware and New Jersey are two nearby states that do this, but other states further away also allow this practice. Once a car dealer sells a car with temporary plates they send the information along to law enforcement, and the Department of Transportation sends buyers new permanent plates. Usually this doesn't take too long but the plague times we live in have changed that. Departments of Transportation are taking longer to send out license plates, sometimes taking up to half a year. This means more cars on the street with temporary paper plates.

Someone probably took notice of all these paper plates and decided to make their own. After all these paper plates are common enough that they don't look suspect, but are unfamiliar enough that they aren't coming under as much scrutiny. Counterfeit paper plates have been seen for sale online, and are certainly also circulating via word of mouth offline. Some online ads for counterfeit printed plates offer registration to match. Other people have taken the simple and straightforward approach of stealing paper plates off of other cars. Aside from stolen or counterfeit paper plates, people have circumvented vehicle controls by using tinted plate covers or covering their plates up entirely. For the more industrious and bureaucratically inclined it seems Texas' particularly lax system was used to register a bogus car dealerships and print out 580,000 license plates, though their seem to have updated their system since the incident.

Using fake plates provides both financial and privacy benefits. The city and highways are becoming more and more surveilled, red light cameras, automated toll systems, parking enforcement, electronic speed traps. Using plates that don't point back to your personal information means that drivers are saving money at camera operated tollbooths and dodging fines for running lights. The Philadelphia Parking Authority operates 146 red light cameras in the city, and they say that 60,000 plates were logged as fake, unreadable, or absent between summer 2020 and summer 2022. Their failure to identify plates has saved drivers $6 million. Counterfeit plates have also been useful for saving money while doing title transfers and avoiding getting registration, insurance or inspections. Aside from saving money, drivers are preserving their privacy, it's harder to track their location through surveillance when their anonymity is protected by the use of counterfeit plates.

So far it seems that police haven't addressed the use of counterfeit plates seriously. The Philadelphia Police Department has twenty-five car mounted license plate reading devices, only two of which are in working order. Currently PPD has no unit or task force focusing on the

dealing with drivers with fake plates. PPD doesn't have a policy of logging the use of forged plates and doesn't track their use across multiple crimes. In terms of the law, possessing a fake plate is a summary offense (less serious than a misdemeanor), and making, selling, or knowingly possessing fake plates is a misdemeanor. Not that arrests for either are very common, in the last 5 years only 57 arrests were made for crimes involving fake or removed plates, only 2 of which took place in 2022. That's arrests, the conviction rate is certainly lower. Most of these arrests

were made by state troopers and suburban cops who referred them to Philly courts, so staying off highways and in the city seems like the way to go for the aspiring privacy enthusiast. PPD's Real Time Crime Center has the capability to read plates from the footage they have access to (SEPTA, city cameras, and others), but the feature isn't set up yet according to a PPD spokesperson. ★

THE FATIGUE OF NOVELTY?

Disruptive Control in Techno-Dystopia

An early January 2023 paper published in Nature found that the percentage of published peer-reviewed scientific articles labeled "disruptive" is dramatically decreasing.

"The average CD index, a measure of disruptiveness ranging from -1(least) to 1(most), declined by more than 90% between 1945 and 2010 for research manuscripts and by more than 78% from 1980 to 2010 for patents." ("'Disruptive' Science Has Declined — and No One Knows Why." Nature 613, 225 [2023]).

Data from millions of manuscripts show that, compared with the mid-twentieth century, research done in the 2000s was much more likely to incrementally push science forward than to veer off in a new direction and render previous work obsolete.

If they have not already, the forces of capital are quickly reckoning with the truth that the realm of science and technology is not the infinitely depthed well they hoped it to be. The university system has artificially inflated the cost of an undergraduate degree, simultaneously pushing so-called STEM (Science Technology Engineering & Math) fields, where much like other degrees, there is nowhere viable for these graduates to use their knowledge and skills. This pushes more people to extend their studies in graduate programs, flooding the job market further with competent technologists. Much like with any other profession, this increases competition in order to lower salaries and increase profit. The competition amongst scientists is colloquially called "publish or perish." That is, publish papers, no matter their quality, or leave a field you have devoted upwards of a decade to.

The religion of categorization that is science aims to entrench itself as the arbiter of ontological certainty and, as such, the driver of the "progress" of human civilization. Science is used to make coherent, interpretable, discrete, and predictable the infinitely chaotic universe we inhabit. Within this simplification, information is lost in the name of coherence and domination. Science and technology become unlikely bedpartners as the myth of infinite growth predicating capital seeks to maximize the ability of humans to exploit resources of the natural universe. Capitalism is concerned with profit and efficiency; science on the other hand is nothing but a costly, time-consuming, and often fruitless process. However, capitalists dump money into research in the hopes of extending the capabilities of human resource extraction. Natural resource extraction in the forms of oil, lumber, coal, metals, gems, etc, is continually shown to have devastating effects on the natural world, creating increasingly uninhabitable conditions for humans on earth. Resource extraction is shifting into the microscale and smaller as the above resources become less tenable to extract. The new resources inhabit the realm of biotechnology and computational technology, as well as their marriages.

"This expansion into the cybernetic realm is the continuance of civilization's colonial desires into the (sub)molecular level."

Long past the dawn of transgenics, the molecular scissors that is the CRISPR-CAS9 system allows for easy genetic alterations, to the point where the first transgenic children (twins) have been birthed. Embryos

were modified in vitro by He Jiankui's lab at SUStech in Shenzhen, China to eliminate a gene called CCR5, promoting resistance to HIV, smallpox, and cholera. The embryos were transplanted into a human uterus to be brought to term. Proteins can be designed to modulate bodily function using open source software, their movements simulated, synthesized in yeast or bacteria media. Alphafold, the AI algorithm from Google, has "solved" 200 million protein structures, expanding the known structural proteome by a factor of 10k. The so-called protein folding "problem" is a common test for AI algorithms predictive power. Meta (formerly Facebook), built a competing model predicting 600 million structures. Cataloging at the individual microscale is also increasingly common, as people send their DNA to the likes of ancestry.com to be sequenced and build a genetic lineage for them; who knows who has access to this genetic information.

This is not presented to alarmistly stoke fears of biotechnology from the perspective of some form of "pure" life and living; plainly, the resources of our very bodies are a new frontier for capital extraction. This expansion into the cybernetic realm is the continuance of civilization's colonial desires into the (sub)molecular level. After our labor, our ever-diminishing time and energy is continually extracted from us for the privilege of barely scraping together an existence, the forces of capital seek to extrude things even more fundamental from our wretched bodies.

David Graeber addressed scientific stagnation a decade ago in his piece *"Of Flying Cars and the Declining Rate of Profit"* for The Baffler. Graeber juxtaposes the techno semi-utopia of the Jetsons, the impressive technology of Star Trek, and other science fiction fed to children of the 60's. He locates this popular projection in the dramatic increase in technological advancement brought about by the Cold War. However, dreams of advanced technology eventually petered out, along with the actual pace of technological advancement. As Graeber puts it, referring to the new visual effects in the new Star Wars films of the time:

"They [people in the 50's] thought we'd be doing this kind of thing by now. Not just figuring out more sophisticated ways to simulate it."

Graeber is correct in naming technologies of simulation being one of the few research areas improving. AI technologies of surveillance are beginning to be used to identify people (even in real time). One such company is Clearview AI, a facial recognition company with ties to far-right figures Ton-That and Chuck Johnson ("The

Far-Right Helped Create The World's Most Powerful Facial Recognition Technology," Huffpost, 2020), with Ray Kelly (former NYPD commissioner) on its board, and which has contracts with many institutions, such as DHS fusion centers. Thousands of Clearview searches have been performed by law enforcement in hopes of identifying suspects. Another software is Amazon's Rekognition, which has been demonstrated to unsurprisingly exhibit racial and gender biases in its identification. Augmented reality (AR) and generative models are increasingly gaining steam, with models such as DALLE and chatGPT able to generate images and text, as well as spoofing visuals and voices, which can have potentially deadly ramifications. Quantum computing has the potential to dramatically increase the speed of the above computations.

Graeber further points to a similar phenomenon in scientific publishing as the paper cited in the beginning of this piece:

"It was right around 1970 when the increase in the number of scientific papers published in the world—a figure that had doubled every fifteen years since, roughly, 1685—began leveling off."

He notes that *"existing patterns of technological development would lead to social upheaval, and [...] we needed to guide technological development in directions that did not challenge existing structures of authority—echoed in the corridors of power."*

Graeber further comments on systematizing technological stagnation by quoting:

"...But if you want to minimize the possibility of unexpected breakthroughs, tell those same people they will receive no resources at all unless they spend the bulk of their time competing against each other to convince you they know in advance what they are going to discover."

This reality of science in stagnation, of scientific "progress" being controlled so as to hinder disruption, speaks to the crux of how science is done. Where does the money to do this time-consuming and often fraught process come from…the government and capitalists. This fact alone drives what research can get done. An article in CEPR by Claudia Steinwender in 2019 cited the DOD's R&D budget at ~$80 billion, while the NSF and NIH dole out $8.5 billion and $44 billion, respectively. With this in mind, it is obvious that the science that gets done, at least in the US, is that which benefits the colonial empire of the US. This piece is much too long already to go into any appreciable detail of science and technologies importance to the colonial project of the US, but science has always been a bedrock for this project and the appeal to ontological certainty of the method has underpinned the foundational white supremacy of the US.

Science is not a utilitarian process through which human life is improved. Technological advancements are controlled so as to not disrupt civilization's construction and to drive colonization. This speaks to both the colonization of land and people by the state and power in step with capital's attempted colonization of every imaginable resource in the quest of infinite profit. The world that technologists want is one where AI tracks each individual's moves at every turn, every identifying factor about people is cataloged in some database. Through the failed "Metaverse" project, they aim to meld the digital escapism of simulation with the world of wage labor, expanding capitalist dystopia into the cybernetic dream realm. They dream of robot police and drivers. They desire a totally controlled and surveilled world, safe for them and the wealth they've stolen, one in which they do not have to interact with the "underclasses" of people. The world in which we live is already a technocratic dystopia, built on the false promise of techno-utopia for all. ★

POWERING DOWN DOMINATION

In the past few months, attacks on electrical substations in Florida, Washington, Oregon, South Carolina, and North Carolina have made the news. The media, while acknowledging that all of these acts of sabotage were unclaimed and could have been carried out by many flavors of "extremist" groups, have pointed at the far right. Articles linked these recent acts to fascist accelerationist literature and social media activity which promotes such attacks and provides instructions for carrying them out, and cited other instances where far-right actors were arrested for conspiring to attack the grid.

Not only are these recent actions unclaimed, but, according to the electrical companies themselves, they are also far from the only sabotage taking place against the electrical grid. Similar actions are allegedly quite common, but they are rarely publicized to discourage copycats. Whether or not these particular attacks were carried out by reactionaries (it is notable that the much-publicized blackout in North Carolina in December coincided with a drag show in the region), anarchists should not allow the construction of the narrative that turning off the power feeding industrial civilization could only possibly serve fascism. Indeed, the same corporate media articles go on to compare recent events to an attack on a California substation almost a decade ago that "could've brought down all of Silicon Valley" and caused $15 million in damages, demonstrating that substation sabotage is a tactic that could induce a major blow against technological domination.

In December, Unicorn Riot put out a report titled *"The Far-Right's Fascination with the US Electrical Grid,"* illustrating a dangerous line of reasoning that has come to be accepted as common sense among Leftist anarchists. After recounting the news about the North Carolina substation attack, the article cobbles together snippets from the Department of Homeland Security and other organs of the federal government about the threat of white supremacist violence to national security, while bemoaning the state's failure to take "appropriate steps to combat far right domestic terrorism." The authors go on to outline the ideology of accelerationism and cite instances of far-right individuals promoting attacks against the grid and other infrastructure on discord, telegram etc. They close the article with a list of six recent substation attacks under the headline *"Pacific Northwest a Far-Right Hotspot,"* implying that all six were undeniably motivated by white supremacist/accelerationist goals without even attempting to back up this claim.

8

"Stealing people's land and with it their means of subsistence, poisoning it with mines and pipelines to produce energy, and then forcing them to work in order to buy back the electricity sucked from the same stolen land or freeze to death — these are the rules of the game that holds us all hostage."

So, unknown people are attacking the grid, and the state has deemed this a national security threat. The state has also deemed Nazis a national security threat, Nazis have promoted and been arrested for plotting to attack the grid, there are a lot of Nazis in the Northwest, therefore any and all attacks on the grid in that region must necessarily be the work of Nazis. This despite the fact that there were more than 120 reported incidents (direct attacks, sabotage, vandalism) in 2022, suggesting that attacking the grid is not the exclusive domain of an organized reactionary minority, but a relatively common practice. Mark Christie of the Federal Energy Regulator Commission (FERC) even said that there are "a lot of incidents" of "a drunk with a gun and an attitude" attacking power transformers.

After a string of substation attacks in Washington and Oregon this winter, two people were arrested and charged with hitting four substations on christmas day after one of their cellphones was used to connect them to the respective locations. After their arrest, one of the men told the cops he was attempting to cut the power in order to rob a store. His girlfriend later spoke to the media saying that he was definitely not part of the far-right and was just hard up for cash.

In May 2020, three self-proclaimed Boogaloo Boys were arrested for allegedly conspiring to attack a Las Vegas substation as part of an attempt to incite riots amid Black Lives Matter demonstrations in the city. Meanwhile, mass media focused disproportionate attention on the participation of a handful of Boogaloo Boys in the riots in Minneapolis. Liberal talking heads went on to parrot the narrative that the riots were being instigated by white supremacist accelerationists to start a race war. The masses of Black rioters and looters were not the true protagonists, but actually being exaggerated, possibly even invented, by Right-wing media as a means of discrediting the "legitimate" non-violent Black-led protests. In this liberal delusion, the rioters are reduced to pawns unwittingly feeding the flames of the civil war desired by white supremacists.

Of course, these two situations — an uprising and a disparate string of attacks — differ in many significant ways. The relevant point is that far-right actors will attempt to precipitate unrest for their own ends, but that should not lead us to fall into this trap and defend the status quo. "Radical media" outlets, echoing Leftist perspectives more generally, often reproduce state or corporate media narratives while simply intensifying their arguments without changing the analysis or challenging the underlying assumptions. DHS says it believes some attacks against the grid may be carried out by racially-motivated extremists, we'll do you one better and say that ALL of these attacks MUST be carried out by organized Nazis!

Discussing the recent wave of attacks as though they were undoubtedly the work of Nazis inadvertently assists the capitalist media and the state in justifying repressive actions that will inevitably be used to target dissidents of all stripes. Liberals reveled in the events of January 6 being labeled "domestic terrorism;" is it that hard to imagine that the success of that label could have something to do with forest defenders in Atlanta now being charged with the same? After the power outages in North Carolina, authorities declared a state of emergency complete with a county-wide curfew. The media's successful fear-mongering around a vulnerable grid under attack by fascist enemies of the state lays the groundwork for similar repressive measures whenever the state feels threatened.

The grid, meanwhile, is at a crisis point all on its own. The catastrophic 2021 outages that left at least 246 dead in Texas demonstrated that the grid currently lacks the redundancy necessary to withstand major weather events, let alone the 40 to 60 percent increase in electricity demand projected by 2050 due to the proliferation of electric cars, appliances, infrastructure, etc. As the state rushes towards its "carbon-free future," wind, solar, and nuclear industries are growing, but the infrastructure needed to store, transform and transport all this juice risks being outpaced. The existing 7,300 power plants, 55,000 transmission substations and 160,000 miles of high-voltage power lines are nowhere near enough.

Bill Gates, a major player in this energy expansion, is building a new $4 billion nuclear power plant, the first of several planned by his company TerraPower, in Wyoming at the site of a former coal plant. How very poetic. He is also advocating for building more inter-regional high-voltage transmission lines in order to pave the way for the fossil-free (and radioactive!) future that is allegedly our only hope.

As electrical infrastructure expands, so does our dependency on it. It goes without saying that countless people depend on electricity to stay alive, and this is not an accident, but a fundamental facet of domination and colonialism. Stealing people's land and with it their means of subsistence, poisoning it with mines and pipelines to produce energy, and then forcing them to work in order to buy back the electricity sucked from the same stolen land or freeze to death — these are the rules of the game that holds us all hostage. As extraction crosses new frontiers, both externally in terms of deep-sea drilling, and internally in terms of digging deeper into our minds and spirits to extract the raw material to power their algorithms, we face a choice: to rupture the cords feeding industrial society or allowing them to continue feeding the deepening cycle of dependence unimpeded.

The novel *Almanac of the Dead* depicts an Indigenous insurgency in the U.S. that is set off by taking out the national grid. Looking internationally, anarchists have sabotaged electricity since the time of Caraquemada, and this was also an initial impulse during insurrectionary upheavals like the Hamburg uprising of 1923. During the '70s, the years that anarchists in Italy first developed an insurrectionary perspective, hundreds of pylons were felled, and *Insurrection Magazine* subsequently published instructions on how to reproduce these actions. Just last year, anarchists in France burned a transformer to cut the power to a municipality that housed the country's largest semiconductor factory, and anarchists in Chile blew up high-tension pylons.

"This type of tactic is not solely the domain of our opponents, then, and the question becomes how to target electrical infrastructure to advance the social war against domination, rather than the civil war desired by accelerationists."

If both reactionary and liberatory revolutionaries recognize that social control is highly dependent on electricity, then it's important that we do not accept the state's version of "security" against a common fascist enemy in our discussions of these matters. As we can see from historical and current struggles elsewhere, it's possible for anarchists to bring liberatory methods and goals to these kinds of ruptures with social control, while opposing reactionary ones. An anarchist method necessarily involves taking ethical considerations seriously—the possible impacts of power outages for people whose lives depend on electricity should not be

minimized or ignored. Neither, however, should the violence inherent in the grid and the order it feeds, though it is usually naturalized and invisibilized.

A communique claiming one of many attacks on a substation in France this year offers an important analysis of the violence of this dependency on state infrastructure, calling it "the ideological blackmail that the march of the techno-industrial world is subjecting us to":

"It seems curious that contemporary Western morality, while it has never ceased to build itself on a series of mass murders and individual enslavements (slavery, colonisation), while it has treated entire populations as nuclear guinea pigs (Polynesia, Algeria,...), while it organises servitude for the majority of people, barely disguised by consumption, while it knows without flinching that its entire standard of living is the fruit of the enslavement of living beings and other out of sight humans, treats as terrorists any individuals who would question the general level of dependency on infrastructures[...] Unplugging this electrical world is an attempt to create a chain reaction, affecting all the infrastructures and things that function thanks to electricity (telecommunication, banking, state, industry and business networks, military and police infrastructures, etc.)."

This type of tactic is not solely the domain of our opponents, then, and the question becomes how to target electrical infrastructure to advance the social war against domination, rather than the civil war desired by accelerationists. This February, two Nazis, including Atomwaffen Division founder Brandon Russell, were entrapped by the FBI for plotting to attack a ring of substations around the city of Baltimore in order to "completely destroy this whole city", specifically because of its majority Black population. What distinguishes whether an action pushes towards civil war or social war, other than the intentions and motivations of those responsible?

Target selection and timing seem to be the most relevant aspects to take into consideration. This could be very straightforward, like targeting the power feeding a prison before a scheduled execution, or the substation feeding a military production hub, such as the one that was targeted in a Belgian suburb in 2020.

Back to Baltimore, if, hypothetically, anti-police riots broke out in the city as they did in 2020 and before that in response to the murder of Freddie Gray in 2015, and unknown individuals decided to cut the power, it

would make no sense to assume that this was definitely carried out by white supremacists because of any similarity to the aforementioned foiled plot. This would be one possible scenario, but just as likely would be an anonymous insurgent aiming to disable CCTV, open up more possibilities for looting, or maybe just taking out their hatred on the system. Speculating only dampens insurectionary potential, feeds liberal non-violence fervor and lends a helping hand to state investigations. In the absence of undeniable far-right involvement, an action must be judged on its own terms — what was attacked, how, and what were the impacts?

Taking aim at the grid itself in a less precisely targetted way could be a very relevant intervention at certain moments; the machinery of repression (and literally all infrastructures of domination) simply cannot function without electricity, and if insurgents are already in the streets tearing a city asunder, such a black-out would be a cherished and invaluable gift.

This is not to suggest, however, that attacks be confined to times of uprising. These riotous moments with the potential to precipitate insurrectional rupture present a very narrow time window. The events of the first night will often spell whether the revolt is extinguished or overflows. An insurgent active minority has almost no chance of effectively disabling the grid in a substantial way during a moment like this if they have not previously experimented with what works in terms of tactics as well as with the informal coordination that enables it to scale.

Thinking through how targets and timing might inform the impact of an action is nuanced and complex, never black and white. However, if we wish to advance the social war and avoid unwittingly defending the apparatus of order that holds this nightmare together, the most difficult questions are also the most important. The media and the authority it represents suggesting that we must either defend the apparatus of power or defend fascists is a construct that manipulates people into identifying with the state against a shared enemy. Instead, we must work to prevent fascists and other para-state authoritarian power structures from taking advantage of societal disintegration for their own ends without taking a step back in our own struggle to destroy this world.

To close, we would like to share a few beautiful words of solidarity from comrades in France who claimed the arson of an ANDRA transmission pylon related to the construction of a nuclear waste storage facitilty near Bure, signed "Autonomous Tortuguita Revenge Committee": together and informally we are stronger!

★

HERE LIES A CORPSE

In February, Ungrateful Hyenas Editions *published a zine collecting critiques of tiqqunists, called* "Decomposition: For Insurrection Without Vanguards." *Popularly known for writings like the* Tiqqun *journal and Invisible Committee books from France, what anarchists call tiqqunism or appelism has developed adherents among* Ill Will Editions, Inhabit, *and more than a few physical spaces across the United States.*

In compiling several translations from abroad, where tiqqunists have already had a highly damaging effect on several struggles that anarchists have shared with them, the zine makes a critical contribution to the nascent conversation about tiqqunism in the US. Tiqqunists are portrayed throughout this new zine, by people who've had to deal with them, as authoritarian insurrectionaries – vanguardists using opacity and inconsistent means to manipulate leftist radicals into helping them develop political power, and selling out any who stand against them. The collection was spurred by the recent piece by Hugh Farrell entitled "The Strategy of Composition." *As the Hyenas say:*

*"*Ill Will Editions *recently published a text championing 'composition' as the strategy that secured 'victory' at the ZAD in Notre-Dame-des-Landes and proposes the same strategy be used in the No Cop City struggle. In bringing these texts together, we hope to spread hostility to this vision of victory and to tiqqunist involvement in the No Cop City struggle, or anywhere else they rear their managerial heads."*

The ZAD (Zone à Défendre/Zone To Defend) at Notre-Dame-des-Landes, 30 kilometers north of the city of Nantes in western France, was an area of farmland and forest where the French government had proposed building an airport in the late 1960s. After decades of resistance and delays to the project, a new push began in the new century. The first major environmentalist occupation began in 2009, kicking off a new and notable resistance until the project was canceled in 2018. The diverse campaign of political, economic, legal, environmental, anarchist, and personal struggle "against the airport and its world" spread internationally during that time. The excerpted piece below can be found in Decomposition, *and touches on the fallout and lessons that followed the alleged victory.*

Here Lies a Corpse
From *Avis de Tempêtes (Storm Warnings) #3,* 2018

After years of struggle, on January 17, 2018 the French state officially announced that they were abandoning their project to build a new airport on the site of Notre-Dame-des-Landes, in favor of expanding the existing one on the outskirts of Nantes. We were finally going to see the full scope of the famous "and its world," which had been brandished as a reassuring and almost self-fulfilling totem within the struggle, an idea meant to prevent the

struggle from being reduced to simple territorial defense, instead nourishing a critique against everything that would allow a nuisance such as the proposed airport to exist in the first place. Would the occupiers continue their fight by extending it to the new designated site, in the name of Neither Here Nor Elsewhere? Would they extend it to other large-scale nuisances, such as those linked to Nantes and its suburbs (Technocampus Alimentation, 'zone to construct' of Pirmil-Les Isles, a new prison being built in Bouguenais, 95 video surveillance cameras being installed with the creation of an Urban Supervision Center linking Nantes, Rezé and Vertou...), or the mega-project of 80 offshore wind turbines near Saint-Nazaire? It is certainly still too early to imagine what new horizons of struggle will be embraced, so vast is the "and its world," but what we do already know is how the victory was celebrated on the ground.

From January 22 to 25, at the express request of the State, which had established this as a prerequisite for continuing negotiations on the future of the occupied land, the citizenist and authoritarian 'composition' of the ZAD began to clear the road that crosses the zone of its protective barriers, but also forcibly removed the two collective shacks that were encroaching onto the road a little too much. Having done their dirty work of maintaining order against the inhabitants who had settled there or were using the shacks, they returned control of the D281 to the authorities - a curious practice of self-management for a "liberated territory" - so that the latter could clear the ditches and drain the field entrances under protection of their escort, and also parade the prefect politician in front of the cameras.

The support committees, on permanent watch since Operation Caesar in 2012, had sworn, spat and even planted symbolic sticks in the ground so that if the shacks were forcibly evicted or the cops arrived on the ZAD, the fight would be on. Sure, but for the existence of a little clause in body 6 at the very bottom of the collective road map, which stipulated that the alarm would only sound if the uniforms were blue, not yellow or black windbreakers. For it is indeed a collection of philo-statist groups, of Leninist troops and adherents of a (not so) imaginary party who cleared the way for a new police occupation that has been going on for six weeks now (up to 30 mobile police vans), with video recording, identity controls, harassment and surveillance via drone, searches of vehicles and living spaces, all in the heart of the ZAD.

When authorities on both sides of the barricade attempted to co-manage the zone, a price had to be paid: the destruction of the shacks of those zadists who were too rebellious against the State dictates and the injunctions of the small entrepreneurs of the struggle. This was not a banal episode of internal conflict, but instead calls for a few reflections on the question of self-organization and its perspectives.

One of the classic problems that arises in any occupation struggle is that of its very project; the tension between an ephemeral occupation intended to self-organize attacks on the surrounding world in the midst of a thousand other decentralized initiatives, and a permanent installation that ends up concentrating forces that are ordinarily incompatible, by projecting itself as an experimental island of more or less radical alternatives. Sooner or later, this untenable contradiction between alternative within and offensive against the existent ends up bursting open, either when the police pressure increases (with the traditional mediatization of some distancing themselves from attacks and denouncing radicals), or conversely under the weight of the negotiated possibility of normalization (with the traditional clearing out of uncontrolled elements).

What is remarkable about recent events in the struggle at Notre-Dame-des-Landes is not so much that the citizenists did not even wait a week to literally toast with the prefect and the army general director of the entire gendarmerie, but that it was precisely the staunch partisans of composition with everyone who just the day before zealously partook in destroying one of the two shacks and evicting its occupants from the roof. When composition means negotiating with the state alongside trade unions and elected officials, when composition means choosing the side of order at a crucial moment of the struggle when those in the minority resistant any legalization, this only reveals the true meaning of this elastic word: collaboration with the power in charge. This kind of de facto convergence between power and counter-power, between constituents and destituents, is not the simple result of an emergency or panic situation, but the consequence of a logic present in the very concept of composition. Allowing authoritarians of all stripes to arrange things among themselves when necessary, it naturally also works at the expense of anti-authoritarians whose qualms are too demanding and not realpolitik enough.

Structurally, the concept of composition is in fact nothing more than the internal application of the military principle of alliance with the outside. If the latter applies between enemies who were irreconcilable yesterday and who will be at war again tomorrow, the former concerns adversaries within the same camp, capable of cohabiting without destroying or excluding each other by putting aside their opposing visions in order to temporarily concentrate their forces in the face of a common enemy. In both cases, this presupposes a remarkable capacity to eradicate the uniqueness of each individual and the singularity of their ideas, as well as the multiplicity of their possible associations, in order to train varied troops so that they march in lockstep in the service of a superior

entity (the party, the assembly, the collective, the people, the movement of struggle).

Beyond the question of whether so-and-so is likable or not, composition is a logic that fundamentally banishes all ethics in favor of the calculations of politics. It is an alternative management technique of order and the organization of confusion that attempts to neutralize the irreducible antagonisms which can smolder within struggles: between the adjustment of the existent or its destruction, between negotiation with power or direct action against it, between scientific counter-expertise or refusal of specialization such as delegation, between acceptance of parties and trade unions or self-organization without mediation, between the presence of journalists or the refusal of any representation, between authority or freedom. It is therefore probably no coincidence that the mode of composition suits authoritarians particularly well, with their quantitative notion of a concentrated and more maneuverable force rather than a disseminated and more autonomous one, with their tactical sense of keeping up with changing winds, and above all with their obsession with decoupling means from ends (which explains, for example, their lack of scruples concerning using professionals of mass lying to deliver their message; their ease in declaring one thing in front of the courts and its opposite in front of their supporters; or their competence at making contact with the institutional left). In this logic of accountants, it is no longer a question of defending autonomous perspectives and subversive ideas here and now by incarnating them in one's own life, but only of strategic situations to be organized and managed, indeed to be disciplined and made governable, in the name of the efficiency of the struggle, to which a few necessarily enlightened beings hold the keys. In this logic of majority decisions, tactical compromises and superior commons, there is, of course, even less thought of vast constellations of affinity groups self-organized in an informal way, giving force a qualitative and dissonant dimension. This dimension is capable of fully expressing the famous "and its world" from an anarchist perspective, with, on the one hand, a revolutionary critique that tries to encompass everything that allows the project being fought against to exist, and, on the other hand, a methodology that nourishes hostilities so that from the initial framework of the struggle—a particular project of power—insurrectionary moments can explode that go beyond it.

Despite the influx of victorious communiqués promising the entry of the occupied lands into the straightjacket of the law, no one can forget that from the offensive beginnings of the struggle, many attacks and acts of sabotage have flourished against the world of the airport (not to mention the dozens of solidarity actions elsewhere or the periods of confrontation with the police).

This was the case with the opposition to the preliminary works (staking and geotechnical drilling, construction of access roads) and the bailiffs as early as 2010; with the occupation-ransack of part of the current Nantes Atlantique airport in Bouguenais in July 2011; with the sabotage of the construction site for the extension of the Sautron/Vigneux-de-Bretagne dual highway in May 2012; with the burning of train equipment in Nort-sur-Erdre in November 2012; with the arson of the Vinci security guard's car in Fay-de-Bretagne in November 2012; with the sabotage of seven electric poles with a sledgehammer on the route of the future road corridor in March 2013; with the sabotage of the mobile telephone relay station in Vigneux-de-Bretagne on three occasions in July, September and October 2014; and with the ransacking of the Total station in Temple-de-Bretagne in February 2016. More recently, these possibilities have also spread their wings to attack biologists (who came to study the marbled newt in Vigneux-de-Bretagne, in April 2015), local collaborators (the shed and straw storage of a hostile farmer burned down in Vigneux-de-Bretagne in November 2012, the family house of the Lamisse couple which was ransacked in January 2016 at Notre-Dame-des-Landes), journacops (cars of France 3 smashed with iron bars in October 2016), and 48politicians (cars of France Bleu Loire Océan and Mélenchon soiled with shit in March 2017).

Reformism is undoubtedly the best option for arranging niches within the existent, and the partisans of alternate conflictuality have a historical head start in terms of the integration and recuperation of struggles. As for the others, there is still a whole world to be attacked, in which autonomous and affinity-based possibilities remain alive, experimented with to the great displeasure of the leaders of composition and their allies in the struggle against this airport.

At Notre-Dame-des-Landes lies a corpse: that of a proper composition that has definitively made clear, once it has been put up against the wall, both with whom (the State) and against whom (the uncontrolled) it wishes to build its opportunistic little world. Also, we know what the price is for letting the more or less visibly organized authoritarians do their politicking in peace. This is good news, because the increasingly unbearable smell of this corpse opens up a thousand other paths. Towards freedom in action, this time. ★

SOME REFLECTIONS ON: 'THE FOREST IN THE CITY'

Anarchists and other radicals face a chronic dilemma when it comes to deciding who to align ourselves with in the course of a particular struggle. We have seen over and over again how much more susceptible we are to being utterly crushed by state repression when we're taking up uncompromising action against the state and are isolated from popular support. We've also seen again and again that when we try to team up with various leftists and non-profit organizations with less radical goals, it ends up empowering those organizations to control and recuperate, for very different ends, what were once ungovernable struggles.

This historical problem is one of many that the authors of *"The Forest in the City: Two Years of Forest Defense in Atlanta, Georgia,"* published in February, shrug aside in favor of a compromised approach that they offer as though it were a self-evident movement strategy. While we appreciate the detailed information and reflections in the piece about this extremely important ongoing campaign, we are also concerned by the ostensibly objective stance taken by the authors. The article seems to take for granted that their conclusions will be shared by all radicals and, in the worst case scenario, could set the stage for discrediting those who might disagree with them from a more radical perspective. Since some of these conclusions seemed somewhat antithetical to us as anarchists, we offer here some thoughts and critiques in the interest of clarifying some alternative strategies that the article overlooks.

Taking for granted that the best approach for a campaign involves quantitatively amassing more people and building popular support, one of the essay's major claims is that talking to mainstream media is productive and necessary in order to pursue that strategy. At some point, the authors go as far as to argue: "Because corporate media coverage is the primary means by which the authorities prepare popular opinion to accept the repression of protesters and poor people, it can be dangerous *not* to intervene in it."

According to their own self-evaluation in this piece, it seems like the activists engaging the media for the Defend The Forest campaign have succeeded in not having their intended messaging censored by the news outlets they've engaged with. This is a rare accomplishment for radicals. But what kind of messaging are we talking about here? The authors do not specify, aside from mentioning advocating for radical social change, a phrase that could mean a number of different things. While undoubtedly many relatively uncontroversial talking points about the importance of conserving forest and stopping further police brutality could be safely adopted by mainstream news outlets, it remains highly unlikely that mainstream media would ever approvingly repeat or express the core values behind most anarchists' participation in the struggle to defend the forest. These values are unavoidably hostile to power, and therefore to the media that power funds.

Engaging with the press inevitably waters down anarchists' ideas, whether we intend to or not, and obscures our larger goals, which extend far beyond our opposition to this particular police facility. As is often the case, it's the more conservative commentators who accidentally speak relatively accurately to our animosity towards the entire system - as the chief of the Atlanta Police Department commented after the most recent week of action, *"This wasn't about a public safety training center. This was about anarchy."*

If we care about building autonomy as a core aspect of the destruction of the state and capital, why not build autonomy from the state and capital's media as well? If our goal is simply to stop Cop City, perhaps dialoging with power and the communication products it offers us will help accomplish this. But it contributes nothing to longer-term radical struggle to participate in the modes of relating and informing provided by the corporate, statist Spectacle rather than developing our own. And while participants in the Atlanta struggle have done both, it is still preferable to focus on the latter. As is generally understood with regard to many of our other enemies, such as fascists, to engage in dialogue is to legitimate the opponent's standpoint. Why should the media lackeys of the state be an exception to this? Is it possible that those who are so keen to be liked by corporate media are a little too interested in power?

If we really believe in our hopes and dreams for the world, let's have the courage to defend them. After all, we're the only ones who are able and willing to do so. But this is also not the core of our struggle against the state. As Josep Gardeneyes wrote in *"A Wager on the Future"* back in 2015, "Up against a prison society, anarchism will not be spread with better or more propaganda. It will spread if it can exercise force against the dominant structures, if it can put in practice — at least in a limited way — its ideas, and if these ideas are applicable to people's daily lives."

Elsewhere, *"The Forest in the City"* addresses the issue of difference and internal critique:

"Clarity about differences is important, but drawn-out

conflicts between rival camps almost always benefit the authorities most of all. The more divisions in a movement, the more emboldened the authorities will be to target the most effective currents within it; when rivals post on social media about each other's errors or vulnerabilities, this can assist the authorities in strategizing or building a narrative to justify repression. Often such conflicts needlessly polarize entire movements, as everyone is compelled to take sides."

This is all well and good, but we can observe that there is no discussion in here of any of the differences that we actually should not tolerate. This is undoubtedly because this is a difficult question with no simple answers, and the authors are speaking here of ideological differences in particular. But if an ideology is itself authoritarian, is it going to be called divisive if as anti-authoritarians we try to separate ourselves from it? What about taking a stance on sexual assault, racism, or other instances of interpersonal harm that happen within our circles? It feels dangerous to approach conflict in such a way in which any stance on a matter of internal hierarchy or oppression within our struggles will be primarily received as damaging to our movements and beneficial to the federal government.

Those of us who operate in relative isolation from the Left and NGOs haven't chosen to do that because it benefits us or is easier or more fun (although we personally think that it is more fun). It's because individuals and organizations from those tendencies have consistently shown they do not share anarchist goals (this should already be obvious from the self-description of many of these organizations), do work that is often in fact counterproductive to our goals, and in the worst of cases occasionally threaten us with repression.

For example, Greenpeace might help with a particular aspect of an ecological struggle like the Atlanta forest defense, but it does not share many of our values and visions for the world. Additionally, legal frameworks are not going to fulfill our broader goals — they might help deter a particular project, but to call them an "offensive front" (as the article does) confuses what we're all against. It's certainly not wrong to file lawsuits or adopt other legal means to stop something especially bad from happening, but how can people using the acceptable legal channels offered by the state be part of a war against the state? What is it that we're at war against then? The language of this article, while often militant, is somehow also so slippery and vague that it's not really clear what we're about or against.

When we tell the story of our struggles in this way — to include people working very much within the system - it might build popular support and reduce our isolation, but it also leaves a door open for dependence on the state

and legal solutions to our problems, which are in fact problems that necessitate a total departure from the state. In a recent interview for this article with a companion who participated in the occupation at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2016-2017, they warned specifically of the dangers of negotiating or building trust in any part of the state: *"One effect of [President Obama's announcement that delayed the pipeline's construction] was that it made some folks more willing to negotiate with the state. The [state's] tactic had given the impression, to some people, that there were actually some 'good guys' in the gov trying to work with and for us. This in turn led some people to feel the need to 'help them help us' and the folks who took that bait started negotiating in seemingly small ways that eventually led to the slow raids and demise of our camps."*

There is simply no good answer right now to the question of principled isolation vs. compromised popularity. There's no use pretending that any of us have one. In the meantime, we don't think that anarchists who have evaluated the options and decided that compromise isn't the most effective one should be called dangerous to the movement. ★
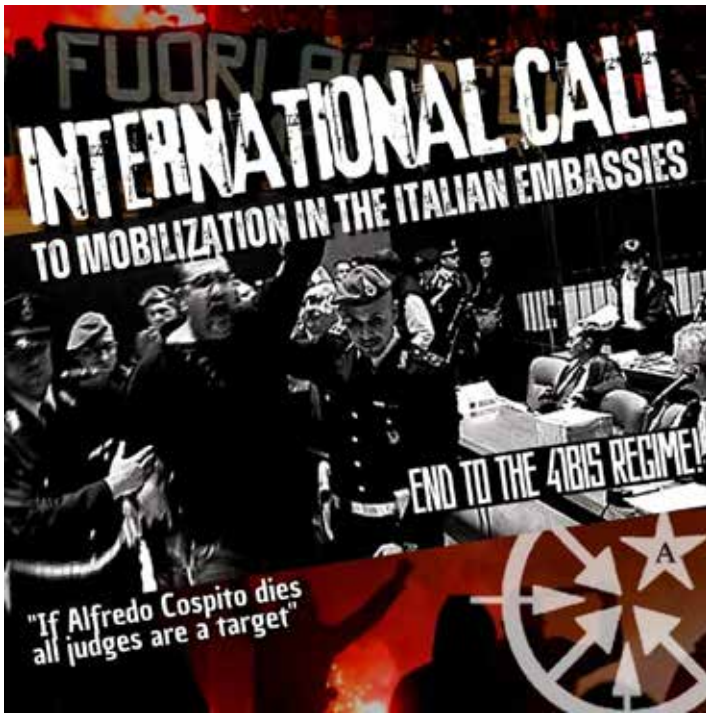

EL ÚNICO DIÁLOGO POSIBLE
CON EL PODER
ES EL ATAQUE

SOLIDARIDAD IRRESTRICTA
CON MÓNICA Y FRANCISCO

Y es por medio del combate anárquico desde donde aportamos a la propagación de la revuelta, apostando por llevar a límites insospechados la conflictividad, negando en los hechos cualquier acuerdo de paz y constitución que pretenda dirigir nuestras vidas

Letter by Alfredo Cospito made public by his lawyer on 1st March 2023. He is an uncompromising anarchist in Italy that his been hunger striking since October 20th, 2022, against the very existence of the 41 bis prison he is held in.

My struggle against 41 bis is an individual struggle, I do not give or receive orders. It is simply that I cannot live in an inhuman regime such as 41 bis, where I cannot freely read what I want, books, newspapers, anarchist periodicals, magazines on art and science, as well as literature and history. The only chance I have of getting out of it is to renounce my anarchy and sell someone out to take my place.

A regime where I can't have any human contact, where I can't even see or touch a handful of grass or embrace a person I love. A regime where photos of your parents are snatched. Buried alive in a grave in a place of death. I will carry on my struggle to the extreme consequence, not for a " request " but because this is not life.

If the aim of the Italian State is to make me "dissociate" from the actions of anarchists outside I want you to know that as a good anarchist I don't take orders. I believe that everyone is responsible for their own actions, and as part of the self-organising current I am not "associated" with anyone, therefore I cannot "dissociate" myself from anyone. Affinity is another matter. A coherent anarchist does not distance themself from other anarchists out of opportunism or convenience.

I have always claimed my actions with pride (also in court, that's why I am here) and I have never criticised those of other comrades, much less when there is a situation like the one I find myself in.

The biggest insult for an anarchist is to be accused of giving or taking orders.

When I was in the High Security regime (AS) I also had censorship and I didn't issue any "pizzini" [*Spanish translator's note: Slips of paper by means of which mafia bosses supposedly pass on their orders*] but articles to anarchist newspapers and magazines. And above all I was free to receive books and magazines, write books, read what I wanted; I was even allowed to evolve, to live.

Today I am prepared to die to make the world understand what 41 bis really is; 750 people suffer it without protesting, continuously turned into monsters by the mass media. Now it is my turn, you turned me into a monster as the bloodthirsty terrorist, then sanctified me as the anarchist martyr who sacrifices himself for others, then turned me into a monster again, a terrible spectre. When it is all over, I shall no doubt be raised to the altar of martyrdom. No, thank you, I am not for this, I will not play your dirty political games.

In fact, the real problem of the Italian State is that all the human rights that are violated in this 41 bis regime in the name of a "security" for which everything is sacrificed, will come to light. Good! You should have thought twice before putting an anarchist in here. I don't know what real motivations and political manoeuvres are behind it. And because someone has used me as a "poisoned apple" in this regime. It was quite difficult not to foresee what my reactions to this "non-life" would be. A State, the Italian one, worthy representative of the hypocrisy of a West that continually gives "morality" lessons to the rest of the world. The 41 bis has given lessons that have been well taken up by "democratic" States such as Turkey (the Kurdish comrades know something about this) and Poland.

I am convinced that my death will be an obstacle to this regime and that the 750 people who have been suffering under it for decades will be able to live a life worth living, whatever they have done.

I love life, I am a happy man, I wouldn't trade my life for anyone else's. And it is because I love it that I cannot accept this non-life without hope.

Thank you comrades for your love.
Always for Anarchy.
Never bowed down.

Alfredo Cospito ★